

## All We Had Was Each Other: An Oral History of the Black Community of Madison, Indiana

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## Book Notices

*All We Had Was Each Other: An Oral History of the Black Community of Madison, Indiana*, by Don Wallis. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998. xx, 136 pp. \$24.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY DARREL E. BIGHAM, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA

Madison, Indiana, is a model town for historic preservationists. Like most places, though, it had a small black neighborhood that after desegregation and urban renewal was virtually forgotten. Don Wallis interviewed approximately 25 natives to recall that heritage. Unfortunately he offers neither historical context nor details on selection or dates and places of interviews. Subjects are generally sixty or older and successful children of the local black elite. Many have left Madison.

Nostalgia pervades this little volume. Declared one native, now an affluent Iowan, "I have great memories, I remember *family*. I remember *community*. . . . everybody cared so much for each other. We lived together in our little world" (136). How to recreate similar community today is a question that many raise but cannot answer.

This is a small window on the separate worlds that dominated Madison and probably most midwestern towns. To many, the past persists. "Growing up here was a healthy experience for me. . . . I'm glad I got out. . . . We have grown. But Madison is still the same as it was when we left" (120). Another declared, "Our neighborhood is in the Madison Historic District and everything . . . is supposed to be preserved, but nobody said anything about preserving *our* homes. They said, tear them down" (80). The Iowan noted, though, that "Iowa City reminds me a lot of Madison. . . . [My] children go through the same kinds of things here that I went through growing up. . . . There is that same racial overtone, always there" (136).

*The Girls Are Coming*, by Peggie Carlson. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1999. 203 pp. \$24.95 cloth, \$15.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY DEBORAH FINK, AMES

*The Girls Are Coming* is Peggie Carlson's first-person narrative of her entry into the blue-collar workforce of the 1970s. Attracted to the high

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